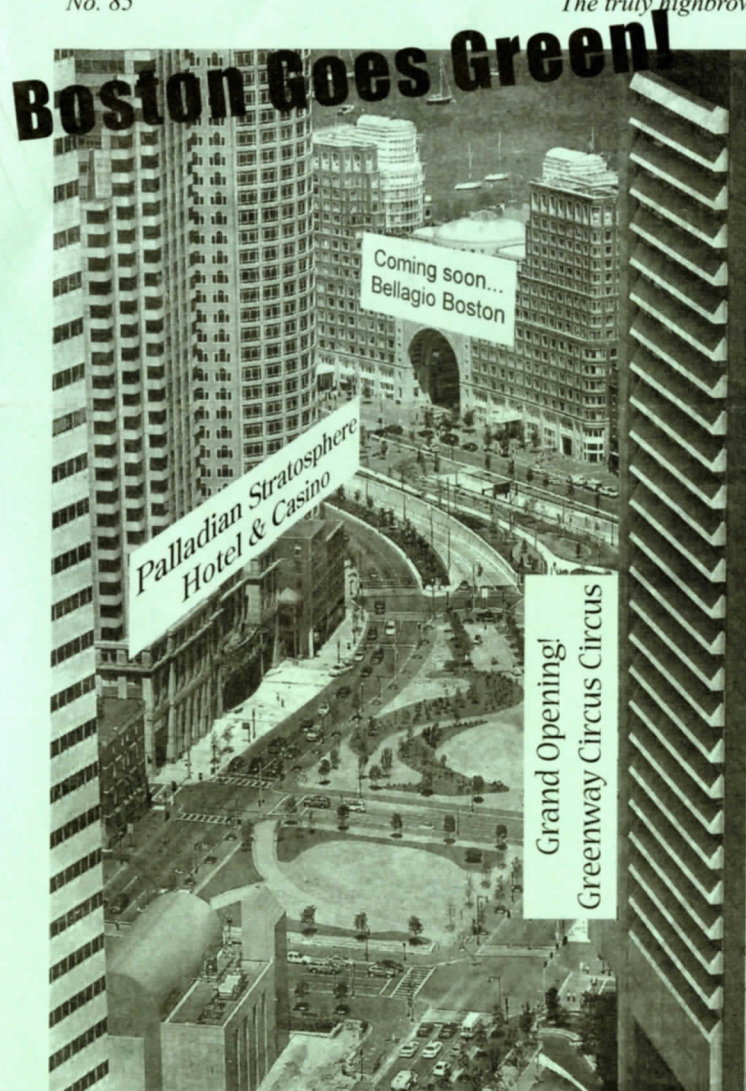


# THE BOSTON INFORMER

No. 85

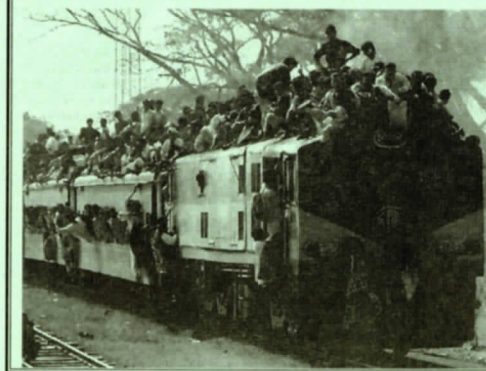
The truly highbrow rag for people who can read

April 1, 2008



## Green Greenbush Ridership Pops

A perfect storm of rising gas prices, scores of empty seats on MBTA Greenbush trains and bleeding-heart tree-huggers truckling to the MASSPIRG report about transit's environmental benefits have led to "capacity problems" on the new Greenbush line. The MBTA reports riders are walking, biking and skate-



boarding to stations in record numbers, and seats for three have been carrying four to five riders. Three marriage proposals have been reported.

◀ **Green for the Greenway** – Following Speaker Sal DiMasi's commitment to funding the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway and his appointment to the powerful Gaming Commission by Gov. Patrick, green is the color of the Greenway. Within two hours of passage of the bill allowing casinos and slot machines along the Greenway, three major Las Vegas casinos announced their intention to open in Boston.

Yesterday, the developer of the proposed Boston Harbor Garage redevelopment announced the project would shift from primarily residential to a "destination resort casino." At 110 stories (reduced from 140) the casino is touted to generate some 50,000 construction jobs and at least 50,000 full-time jobs including spin-off careers in gambling addiction clinics, pawn shops, poker chip manufacturers, lending offices and stock brokers. The parking operators will be making odds on whether your car will be returned in its original condition and rates will be based on your winnings or losses.

The Rose Fitzgerald Greenback Conservancy purportedly is looking seriously into several revenue-enhancing schemes. Picking up the argument that travelers on the east-west route to Boston, the MassPike, are unfairly burdened with tolls, the Conservancy is proposing to install tastful pedestrian toll gates on the Greenway paths that runs north-south. A spokesperson for the Conservancy said that, in a flash of innovation, CharlieCards will be accepted as payment. In addition the Conservancy will be leasing small, tastful kiosks that would include toilets, CharlieCard sales and recharging stations and slot machines. Revenues from these would help fund the Greenway maintenance.

## Smart Car Alternative

Stop & Shop and Shaw's markets have come up with an alternative transportation model that features shopping cart attachments for ease in rolling around the grocery aisles. Fueled with



recycled peanut, corn and soon-to-be abundant leftover trans-fat oils from nearby restaurants, the new vehicles have added benefits beyond helping cut down on foreign oil consumption. Because shoppers will drive

to the store and shop using the same vehicle, far fewer parking spaces will be needed allowing for supermarkets to expand their selection of bottled water, soda and toilet paper. As part of an introductory offer, each new owner at the Mandarin Hotel and Residences will receive a complimentary vehicle.

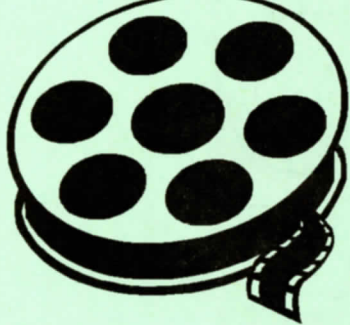


# Movies Not to Miss!

**Atonement** — a story with a happy ending as Bechtel Corp. and Parsons Brinckerhoff pay \$407 million to atone for their part in Big Dig sins.

**The Bank Job** — a shameful tale of how banks, which succeeded in swindling taxpayers out of billions of dollars in the 1990s savings and loan scandals, are trying again with the sub-prime mortgage scam.

**Be Kind Rewind** — a mythical fable of how much better it would have been if the Big Dig had had competent managers.



**No Country for Old Men** — the ironic story of how the President and Congress let Medicare and Social Security go bankrupt.

**Definitely, Maybe** — a documentary on the evolving plans to repair the Storrow Drive tunnel and the Charles River bridges.

**Fool's Gold** — a fairy tale about the salvation of the state's finances by setting up gambling casinos.

**10,000 B.C.** — a mystery about the last time there was major global warming as the Ice Age ended, for reasons unknown.

**There Will be Blood** — cameras follow Speaker of the House DiMasi and Governor Patrick as they "debate" casinos in the Commonwealth.

**1 Paperless CharlieTicket?** — Fifteen months after introducing CharlieTickets to replace tokens, the MBTA has calculated the cost of the disposable fare media. Although the reusable CharlieCards have cut down on waste, the MBTA estimates that the cost to produce millions of the coated CharlieTickets; recycle or dispose of used Tickets; extra cleaning personnel needed to clean up used Tickets thrown around stations, and the extra paper used for brochures and signs explaining the difference between Tickets and Cards has wiped out about half of the expected new revenue from the fare increase.

MBTA General Manager Dan Grabthelime said CharlieTickets are fun and we need more fun in our lives. He is looking forward to trying one soon.

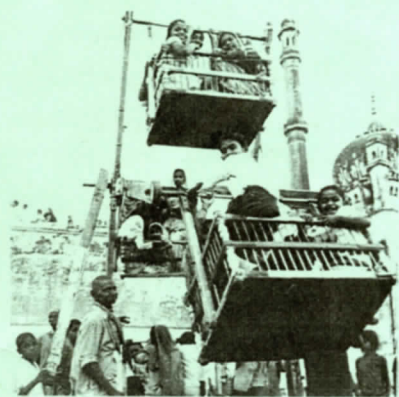
**3 New Charity Fund** — Not to be outdone by the Rose Fitzgerald Greenback Conservancy's commemorative brick sale to raise money, Mayor Menino has his own plan. As part of his green/sustainable program, the Mayor is selling commemorative Mayor Thomas M. Menino playing-card noisemakers for the spokes of bicycles (comes with free clothes pin) for \$5 (\$2 for seniors).

Designed by fifth-grader Trixie Watson, each card features a picture of the Mayor riding his bike along with two tips for being green. Sample tips include: pave your lawn to save gas cutting the grass; go to bed when the sun goes down to cut use of electricity; throw your clothes away instead of washing them in water-wasting washers.

Money raised from the sale will be used to help indigent developers.

**2 Seen on a VIP's Blackberry:** Here's my .02. OOTD, Kerasiotes & Barry Locke will be figured out to be BPLM and I'll really LOL. After SMurphys QSO about CA/T, JimmyK should HHIS but he'll & :-& with EG about his role. IDN how Locke was when he FUBB, but the CA/T stuff is SSINF, and no one can escape, KNIM? IMHO, SMurphy and TBI are the best at showing the issues, YKWYCD. BFN, Fred

**4 Putting the 'R' back in DCR** — A round of applause for the new people-powered Ferris wheels at DCR playgrounds. These fully sustainable contraptions only require nine burly people to push and pull the bamboo and raffia equipment. The initial plan was to install the Ferris wheels near dog parks to provide the dogs with rigorous exercise operating them. The MSPCA killed that idea five minutes into the environmental review process. OSHA supported the "no build" option.



## MBTA: Back on Track?

If it weren't for bad luck, the MBTA would have no luck at all... First it was the Red Line cars with the square wheels causing a ruckus on Beacon Hill. Then the MBTA's brand new Breda Green Line cars wouldn't stay on the track and were sent back to Italy for corrective action. After MBTA advocate/watchdogs from ICWF (I Could Walk Faster) expressed concerns that some of the new equipment was off line in the shop for repair for a ridiculous amount of time, the MBTA dispatched a crew of 17 top-level managers on a fact-finding junket mission to Italy. Photos documenting the work process at the foreign manufacturing locations might explain the problems.



## Headlines You'll Never Read

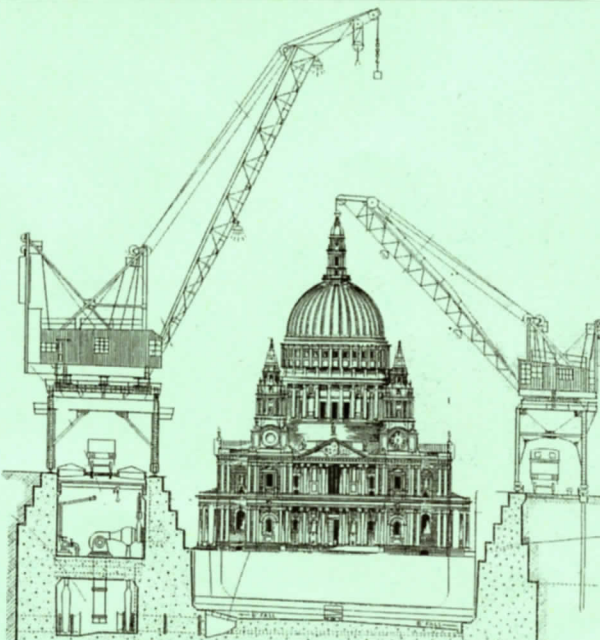
- ✓ MBTA GM, Carmen's Union agree on health, pension benefits, the MBTA budget busters
- ✓ Turnpike head LeBovidge consults with ex-chief Amorello
- ✓ MBTA Boylston-So. Boston Silver Line wins cost-effectiveness award from Fed. Transit Admin.
- ✓ BRA tells developer to follow zoning requirements
- ✓ All of state financial problems disappear when casinos open
- ✓ WalkBoston declares 'mission accomplished'; Boston is walkable
- ✓ Independent engineer Steve Kaiser joins National Assn. of Industrial and Office Properties Public Affairs Committee
- ✓ Mayor initiates 2010/2020 Comprehensive Plan for entire city
- ✓ Transport Sec. Cohen cancels Fall River/New Bedford; puts money to local education, jobs

## Going Green: New City Hall

The Mayor's plan for a brand spankin' new City Hall at Dry Dock 4 in So. Boston has evolved into a plan to retain the original historic dry dock while creating a sustainable edifice. The Mayor's big plan is to get free architectural design services by holding a design competition (with very prescriptive guidelines), build the new City Hall off site and load it into the dry dock upon completion. The building will be made completely of recycled paper products including State of the City addresses from the past 20 years, environmental impact statements, unused confetti from the 2008 Super Bowl parade, rejected traffic calming requests from residents and Downtown Crossing consultant reports.

The City's first aquaculture farm will be located below the new building in the dry dock. Tidal power and wind power harnessed from the windbags in City Hall will be the building's only source of power. To counter arguments that the new City Hall will be isolated and difficult to reach, the Mayor has included transit lines at both sides of the new access along the dry dock.

Given the waterfront location, experts recommend propagating and harvesting algae and seaweed instead of a green roof.



New 'green' City Hall at Dry Dock 4 will be made of recycled paper and will feature an aquaculture farm.

## New Revenue Sources Proposed By Mass. Legislature

Having defeated Governor Patrick's three-casino bill, the Massachusetts Legislature wasted no time getting down to business to tackle the growing revenue problem. In an exclusive Boston MisInformer interview, Speaker Sal DoNothing shared some of the ideas, many of which pursue a green and Sustainable agenda:

- Expand the bottle-deposit law to cover juice, water, wine, milk, cider, yogurt, cottage cheese, salad dressing, and capers.
- Double the "sin taxes" on cigarettes and liquor. Expand to include candy bars, Ben & Jerry's ice cream pints and double mocha cappuccino lattes.
- Double the registration fees on second cars in one household; triple it on third cars, etc.
- Triple the tax on mystical crystals and pyramids.
- Charge a "viewing fee" for tourists at the Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Greenway.
- Charge fee for accessing Mass.gov Web site.



## You Were Asking

**Q.** I hear the Mayor has announced a number of visions recently, including a facelift for Dorchester Avenue, a green bridge/greenspace over Storrow Drive, limiting building heights along the Greenway and planting 100,000 trees by 2020. Are these 20/20 visions based on some Timothy Leary input or has LensCrafters given out rose-colored glasses?

**A.** It might be those early-morning bicycle rides that allow for clear vision.

**Q.** Our roads, bridges and tunnels are decaying and the Transportation Finance Commission estimated \$15 billion-\$20 billion is needed for repairs. When will we do the simple

and effective remedy of raising the state gas tax to provide the funds?

**A.** When our state legislators grow backbones.

**Q.** Is it true the chief planner for the City of Boston/head planner for the BRA does not have a degree in planning?

**A.** Yes.

**Q.** I hear the BRA will "create unity and cohesion" in Downtown Crossing by promoting "diversity of people and products." What does this blather mean?

**A.** Who knows? The recommended actions identified by the international team of consultants for Downtown Crossing included adding more signs and removing the curbstones.

## Welcome to The Boston MisInformer,

the annual April Fool's issue of The Boston Informer, an otherwise "serious" newsletter covering development, construction and transportation downtown.

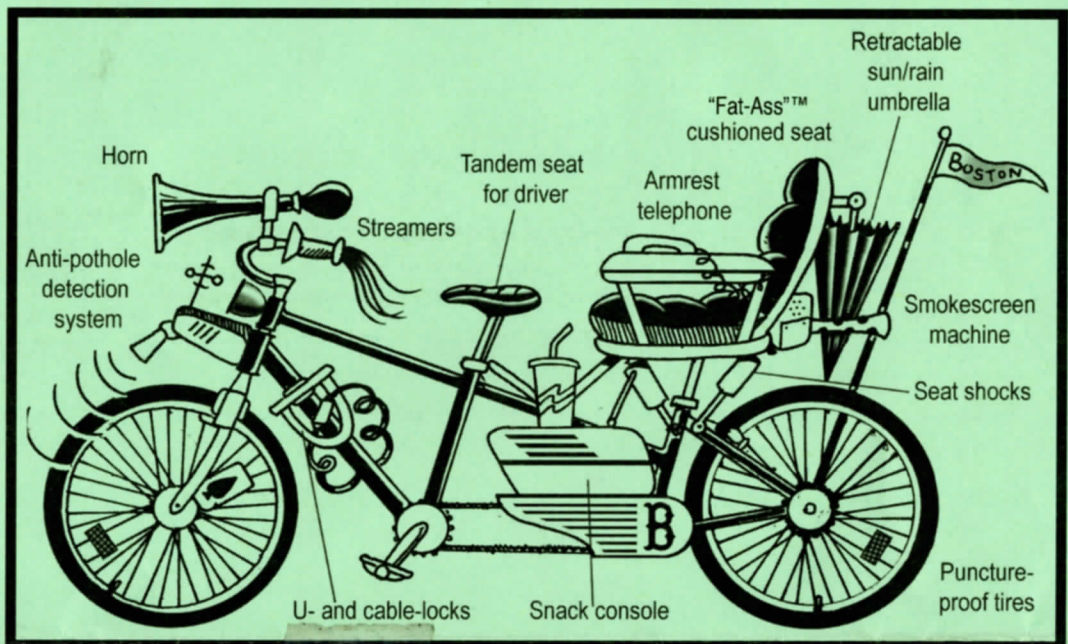
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*The Mayor's new bicycle has led him to understand the simple joys of riding and even commuting on two wheels....*

On order for the Mayor's bicycle:

- GPS
- rose-colored glasses
- noise-muffling ear-phones
- heavy-duty pump for fixing flat tires



## Mis THE BOSTON INFORMER

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**TIME TO RENEW**

7/1/07

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